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The New York Times



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NATIONAL DESK

Questions of Preferential Treatment Are Raised in Florida Sex Case

By ABBY GOODNOUGH

In the summer and autumn of last year, when most of the mansions here stood empty behind their towering hedges, the police stealthily watched one at the end of a waterside lane. They monitored the comings and goings of its owner's private jet, subpoenaed his phone records and rifled through his trash.

The owner was Jeffrey Epstein, 53, an intensely private New York money manager with several billionaire clients. Months earlier, the stepmother of a 14-year-old girl told the Palm Beach police that a wealthy older man, whom the girl later identified as Mr. Epstein, might have had inappropriate sexual contact with her.

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